

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PORG, WTO

SUBJECT: FRENCH REQUEST FOR US SUPPORT FOR RE-ELECTION OF
WTO SYG LONATI

REF: A) PARIS 22114; B) STATE 174357

1. TALKING POINTS WHICH EMBASSY MAY USE FOR DISCUSSIONS
WITH FRENCH GOVT CONCERNING US OPPOSITION TO RE-ELECTION OF
WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION (WTO) SEC GEN LONATI ARE CONTAINED
IN PARA 5. MEANWHILE, ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION,
WHICH EMBASSY SHOULD DRAW UPON AT ITS DISCRETION, IS
INCLUDED IN PARAS 2 THROUGH 4.

2. AS NOTED BELOW, THE U.S. CURRENTLY BENEFITS marginally
FROM WTO'S OUT PUT OF STATISTICS, TOURISM STUDIES AND OTHER
ACTIVITIES. JUSTIFICATION FOR OUR CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP IN
WTO IS THEREFORE BASED ON THE EXPECTATION THAT, WITH EFFEC-
TIVE LEADERSHIP, WTO CAN BE CONVERTED INTO AN ORGANIZATION
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WHICH WILL SERVE U.S. INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES, INCLUDING
THE SIMPLIFICATION REDUCTION AND ELIMINATION OF NATIONAL
BARRIERS TO TOURISM AND THE FACILITATION OF TOURISM GENERAL-
LY. WE STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT NO IMPROVEMENT IN WTO'S

PERFORMANCE THAT WILL SATISFY US WILL TAKE PLACE WHILE
LONATI REMAINS AS SECRETARY GENERAL. FRENCH EMBASSY HERE,

IN ITS NOTE OF JULY 6 REQUESTING US SUPPORT FOR LONATI (COPY BEING POUCHED), ARGUED FOR THE NEED OF CONTINUITY DURING WTO'S FORMATIVE PERIOD. ON THE CONTRARY, IMPROVEMENT IN MANAGEMENT OF WTO, IN US VIEW, IS WHAT IS NEEDED.

3. WE AGREE WITH OBSERVATION IN REF A THAT OUR OPPOSITION TO LONATI'S RE-ELECTION WOULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE IF WE NOW HAD ALTERNATE CANDIDATE IN MIND. HOWEVER, FRENCH DEMARCHE REQUESTING SUPPORT FOR LONATI IN OUR OPINION IS PREMATURE AND APPEARS TO BE DELIBERATELY DESIGNED TO PIN DOWN A COMMITMENT FOR LONATI'S SUPPORT AMONG MAJORITY OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS BEFORE THESE MEMBERS HAVE TIME TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY ALTERNATIVELY CONTENDERS. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE STATE THAT COUNCIL SHALL RECOMMEND CANDIDATE TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY WHEN "HIS TERM OF OFFICE IS ABOUT TO EXPIRE"; THIS CLEARLY POINTS TO SPRING, 1979 COUNCIL SESSION BEFORE FALL 1979 ASSEMBLY. US DELEGATION, IN MAKING THIS POINT AT LAST COUNCIL MEETING, ARGUED THAT NEXT (NOVEMBER, 1978) COUNCIL MEETING SHOULD DISCUSS RATHER COMPLICATED AND AMBIGUOUS PROCEDURES FOR SELECTING NEXT SECRETARY GENERAL BEFORE A DISCUSSION OF CANDIDATES. FRANCE, IN OUR VIEW, IS "JUMPING THE GUN" BY ASKING NOW FOR LONATI'S ENDORSEMENT. BEST US RESPONSE, UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, IS TO COUNTER FRENCH EFFORT WITH CLEAR STATEMENT OF US POSITION.

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4. CLAUDE BATAULT OF FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTRY, WHO HAS HEADED FRENCH DELEGATION TO WTO MEETINGS THROUGH 1977 (FRANCE IS NO LONGER MEMBER OF COUNCIL), IS WELL AWARE OF U.S. OPPOSITION TO LONATI'S RE-ELECTION. US DELEGATION HEAD TO FEBRUARY, 1977 COUNCIL MEETING SPENT EVENING WITH BATAULT EXPLAINING U.S. CONCERNS REGARDING LONATI. PIERRE GARRAULT, CHAIRMAN OF WTO'S BUDGET AND FISCAL COMMITTEE, IS ALSO AWARE OF U.S. VIEW. THEREFORE, U.S. POSITION CONVEYED TO FRENCH EMBASSY JULY 10 SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE TO GOF.

FOLLOWING ARE TALKING POINTS:

A. WTO, DURING FIRST TWO AND ONE-HALF YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE, HAS DEMONSTRATED ITS INEFFECTIVENESS (PAR 2) SHOULD BE DRAWN ON AS APPROPRIATE). LONATI, WITH HIS MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS HEAD OF TWO'S PREDECESSOR ORGANIZATION, AND WITH A NEW STAFF TO TRAIN, HAS HAD UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD AN EFFICIENT AND USEFUL INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION; HE HAS NOT RPT NOT USED THIS OPPORTUNITY, AND

THEREFORE, IN US VIEW, IS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR WTO'S PRESENT LACK OF EFFECTIVENESS. SPECIFICALLY, DESPITE

REPEATED URGINGS BY COUNCIL, HE DID NOT RPT NOT FILL UNTIL LATE 1977 KEY VACANCIES OF DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, WHICH HAS HAD DIRECT IMPACT ON WTO'S OUTPUT. THE QUALIFICATIONS AND THE CALIBRE OF THE PERSONNEL WITH WHICH HE HAS SURROUNDED HIMSELF ARE INADEQUATE TO THE TASK. NO EMPLOYEE OF WTO HOLDS A RANK HIGHER THAN P.4. PLANNING CAPABILITY IS DEFICIENT. BUDGET REQUIREMENTS ARE HABITUALLY UNDERESTIMATED--AS ARE PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORLD TOURISM CONFERENCE IN 1980 IS BEHIND SCHEDULE. A REPORT DUE TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN JUNE 1978 HAS HAD TO BE POSTPONED DUE TO LACK OF PROGRESS TO REPORT. EVIDENCE IS OVERWHELMING THAT LONATI IS UNWILLING TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY, WITH RESULT THAT, DURING HIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FREQUENT TRIPS, ORGANIZATION'S WORK SUFFERS. IT IS OBVIOUS ALSO THAT MORALE OF WTO STAFF IS VERY LOW, ALTHOUGH ALLEGATIONS OF EMPLOYEES THAT LONATI USES FAVORITISM IN HIRING AND PROMOTING STAFF MEMBERS CANNOT BE PROVEN. AFRICANS ALSO RESENT LONATI'S FAILURE TO HELP THEM DEVELOP THEIR REGIONAL ORGANIZATION. LONATI HAS FAILED TO RESPOND ADEQUATELY TO REPEATED REQUESTS FROM COUNCIL AND ASSEMBLY MEMBERS FOR BETTER QUALITY TOURIST STUDIES AND TIMELY DOCUMENTATION FOR MEETINGS. SOME DOCUMENTS ARE NOT DISTRIBUTED UNTIL THE DELEGATES CONVENE AT THE MEETING SITE AT BOTH REGIONAL COMMISSION AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS. IN ADDITION, LONATI HAS APPOINTED, A NUMBER OF "REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES", SOME OF WHOM ARE INEFFECTUAL AND LACK THE LANGUAGE QUALIFICATIONS NECESSARY TO DEAL WITH WTO MEMBERS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE REGIONS. LONATI HAS SO FAILED TO KEEP THESE REPRESENTATIVES INFORMED OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION THAT THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR THE AMERICAS HAS HAD TO ASK THE MEMBERS HE IS SUPPOSED TO SERVE FOR REPORTS OF MEETINGS.

B. DURING MAY, 1977 GENERAL ASSEMBLY, WTO REPEATEDLY VIOLATED ITS STATUTES AND RULES OF PROCEDURE, AND LONATI PROVIDED LITTLE OR NO GUIDANCE TO ASSEMBLY OFFICERS TO MEET THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS RESPECT. EXAMPLES OF SUCH VIOLATIONS WERE ILLEGAL ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNCIL'S TERM OF OFFICE CONTRARY TO RULES OF PROCEDURE. IN US VIEW, ADHERENCE TO ORGANIZATION'S STATUTES AND RULES IS VITAL IF WTO IS TO BE ACCEPTED AS A PROFESSIONAL AND RESPECTED INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODY.

C. DURING COUNCIL MEETING PRIOR TO 1977 GENERAL ASSEMBLY, LONATI PRESENTED FOR 1978-1979 CONSIDERABLY DISTORTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BUDGET. HE ALSO USED IMPROPER PROCEDURES IN ATTEMPTING, UNSUCCESSFULLY, TO AUGMENT 1978-1979 BUDGET DURING ASSEMBLY. IN US OPINION, A SYG WHO IS MORE ADEPT AT BUDGETARY PROCEDURES IS REQUIRED.

D. U.S. BELIEVES THAT ABOVE POINTS AMPLY DEMONSTRATE NEED FOR NEW WTO SECRETARY GENERAL WHEN LONATI'S TERM EXPIRES AT END OF 1979. WE PREFER NOT TO BACK AN ALTERNATIVE CANDIDATE UNTIL THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONFER WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS. THIS IS NOW SCHEDULED TO OCCUR IN SEPTEMBER. EARLY SOUNDINGS INDICATE THAT ONE OR MORE CANDIDATES MAY EMERGE FROM THIS HEMISPHERE, AND THAT AT LEAST ONE OF THESE CANDIDATES IS VIABLE. WE STRESS THAT ANY CANDIDATE SUPPORTED BY THE U.S. SHOULD HAVE APPROPRIATE EXECUTIVE AND PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS. VANCE

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